

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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EXDIS

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TAGS: PFOR, IRN, AF, PK, IN

SUBJECT: SHAH'S VIEWS ON AFGHANISTAN, INDIA AND PAKISTAN

REF: TEHRAN 2654

FOR AMBASSADOR

1. WE FOUND THE SHAH'S VIEWS ON RELATIONS WITH HIS SOUTH ASIAN NEIGHBORS (REFTEL) OF CONSIDERABLE INTEREST. IN VIEW OF IRAN'S INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLE IN POLITICS OF REGION, YOU MAY AT YOUR DISCRETION CONVEY TO THE SHAH AT APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY OUR OWN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF HIS FOREIGN POLICY ON THE SUBCONTINENT.

2. WE VIEW IRAN'S POLICY OF EXTENDING ITS POLITICAL TIES

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AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH ASIA

AS A MAJOR POSITIVE FACTOR IN THE DIPLOMACY OF THE REGION. CONTRARY TO THE SHAH'S NEGATIVE ASSESSMENT, WE BELIEVE THAT IRAN'S IMPROVED TIES WITH INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN ALREADY ARE CONTRIBUTING TO MODERATION ON PART OF BOTH. FOR EXAMPLE, THE INDIAN REACTION TO OUR ARMS EMBARGO DECISION HAS ON THE WHOLE BEEN RESTRAINED. THE INDIAN LEADERSHIP MAY WELL HAVE FACTORED INTO ITS REACTION NOT ONLY THE RISKS TO ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S., BUT

ALSO ITS GROWING TIES WITH IRAN. WE NOTE ALSO THAT THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT, WHILE PAYING LIP SERVICE TO AFGHAN CONCERNS, DID NOT JOIN DAOUD IN HIS STRONG CRITICISM OF THE U.S. AND PAKISTAN DURING HIS NEW DELHI VISIT.

3. SIMILARLY, WE THINK IRAN'S IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN MAY BE PAYING DIVIDENDS IN LIMITING AFGHAN OPTIONS VIS-A-VIS PAKISTAN. OUR PERCEPTION IS THAT AFGHANISTAN, DESPITE CONTINUED STRIDENT ADVOCACY OF ITS PUSHTUN AND BALUCHCAUSE, DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE CARRYING ITS CAMPAIGN BEYOND THE VERBAL STAGE--AT LEAST WE HAVE SEEN NO EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY. WE ALSO HAVE BEEN PLEASED TO NOTE RECENT--AND REPEATED--AFGHAN ASSURANCES TO US THAT GOA SEEKS NO TERRITORY OF PAKISTAN, NOR DOES IT DESIRE TO SEE A FURTHER BIFURCATION OF PAKISTAN. THESE EXPRESSIONS, WHILE NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENTING A ROADMAP OF ULTIMATE INTENTIONS OR DESIRES, CAN BE SEEN IN PART AS GOA RECOGNITION THAT AFGHAN POLICY TOWARD PAKISTAN MUST ALSO TAKE ACCOUNT OF GOA DESIRE FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN'S FRIENDS, SUCH AS IRAN AND U.S.

4. WE BELIEVE SHAH'S POLICY HAS THUS IN FACT CONTRIBUTED TO PROMOTION OF STABILITY AND MODERATION AMONG COUNTRIES OF SOUTH ASIA--OBJECTIVES WHICH COMPLETELY ACCORD WITH OUR OWN. KISSINGER

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